

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8822

INFO FAA BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS PARIS 10732

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, FR

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES' VIEWS ON
CONCORDE

1. IN SPEECHES DURING THE CURRENT PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION CAMPAIGN ALL THREE LEADING CANDIDATES HAVE
NOW SPOKEN OUT ON CONCORDE PROJECT AND EACH HAS
FAVORED CONTINUING THE PROGRAM. VIEWS OF EACH AS
REPORTED IN PRESS ARE GIVEN BELOW.

2. LE MONDE QUOTES THE FOLLOWING REMARKS MADE BY
GISCARD D'ESTAING AT AN ELECTORAL RALLY AT TOULOUSE
ON APRIL 29: QUOTE IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE
AERONAUTICAL VOCATION OF TOULOUSE BE PRESERVED.
OPERATION CONCORDE, WHICH IS ALREADY A SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SUCCESS, MUST BE AN INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL
SUCCESS. WE MUST PUT THE PLANE INTO SERVICE ON SCHEDULE
AND OVERCOME EVENTUAL DIFFICULTIES ABROAD. I AM
PERSUADED THAT UNDER THE PRESSURE OF COMPETITION
OTHER AIRLINES THAT HAVE NOT YET PLACED AN ORDER FOR
CONCORDE WILL RECONSIDER THEIR DECISION. AS FOR
AIRBUS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO EXPAND ITS SALES ON INTER-
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NATIONAL MARKETS. I CONSIDER THAT THIS AIRCRAFT

NOW HAS THE CHANCE TO BE A MAJOR COMMERCIAL SUCCESS.
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3. AFP REPORTS THAT IN RADIO BROADCAST MAY 1
FRANCOIS MITTERAND SAID THAT CONCORDE CONSTRUCTION
COULD FORM PART OF A PUBLIC EQUIPMENT PROGRAM
FINANCED FROM PROCEEDS OF THE TEN BILLION FR. LOAN
WHICH IS PROPOSED AS PART OF HIS ELECTORAL PLAT-
FORM. WHILE DEPLORING WHAT HE CONSIDERED WERE
ERRORS COMMITTED AT OUTSET IN ESTIMATING COST OF
CONCORDE PROGRAM, MITTERAND STRESSED ADVANCE TECH-
NOLOGY OF CONCORDE, NECESSITY OF MAINTAINING EMPLOY-
MENT OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS IN FRENCH AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY,
AND ALSO NEED TO COMPETE WITH US IN AERONAUTICAL
FIELD.

4. CHABAN-DELMAS HAS ALSO EXPRESSED VIEW THAT COM-
PETITIVE REASONS WILL OBLIGE OTHER AIRLINES TO BUY
CONCORDE ONCE IT IS PLACED IN SERVICE BY FRENCH AND
BRITISH. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD EXPLAIN TO BRITISH
THAT ABANDONMENT OF CONCORDE PROJECT WOULD BE
QUOTE STUPID UNQUOTE AND HE SUPPORTED MESSMER
GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL TO INCREASE CONCORDE PRODUCTION
LINE FROM SIXTEEN TO NINETEEN AIRCRAFT. IN SPEECH
AT TOULOUSE MAY 2 CHABAN-DELMAS REITERATED ABOVE
ARGUMENTS AND ADDED THAT ENTRY INTO COMMERCIAL
SERVICE LATER THIS MONTH OF AIR FRANCE'S FIRST
AIRBUS WOULD CONTRIBUTE FURTHER TO SUCCESSFUL MARKETING
OF THAT AIRCRAFT TOO.
IRWIN

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